

Tom Sayers And Fitzsimmons Are In Class By Themselves

In recounting the vanished glories of the ring the names of two men stand out as constituting a class all by themselves. Thomas Sayers and Robert Fitzsimmons, upset the old theory that a good big man can always whip a good little man. Both of them fought big men, and defeated them. Some old-timers will insist that Jim Mac belongs in this class of champions, but in the opinion of the writer, he was never called upon to pit his strength and science against such good men as Sayers and Fitzsimmons. The latter never failed it with Heenan nor beat a Corbett.

Today marks the semi-centenary of the passing of brave Tom Sayers, "the Little Wonder," who was the first man to demonstrate that a middleweight, if classy enough, may aspire to heavy-weight honors. It was on the fifteenth of November in 1865 that Tom was laid away for his long rest. Never before or since, perhaps, has so great a cortege attended a pugilist on his last journey. Tens of thousands of sincere mourners, including many men of ancient lineage and honorable names, took part in the last tribute of respect to the plucky little fighter who had battled so bravely and so honestly. Immediately behind the hearse followed the old man's pony trap, and in its seat, erect but mournful-eyed, sat the pugilist's firmest friend, his great mascot, Lion. A carved figure of the dog still guards his master's grave in Highgate cemetery, London, as a part of the tomb which has since been erected to commemorate the name and fame of one of England's greatest champions.

It was only five years after his famous fight with John C. Heenan for the world's title that Sayers passed away, in his thirty-eighth year. He was afflicted with diabetes and tuberculosis, diseases brought on by the irregular and intemperate life he led after retiring from the ring.

After his indecisive fight with Heenan, Sayers became the proprietor of a circus, but he had no knowledge of business, and he soon failed. After that he spent his remaining years loafing about London, always accompanied by his dog. He was an eccentric figure, wearing high boots with tassels, and across the knees in large letters were the words, "Tom Sayers, Champion." Sayers was an Irish Cockney, a fighting breed hard to heat, and was a bricklayer before he became a pugilist. He was twenty-one when he fought his first battle, defeating Alby Cross. He fought his way to the middleweight championship, with only one defeat registered against him, and then announced his intention of going after the "heavyweight" title. This provoked much laughter, for nobody thought he stood a chance against big Bill Perry, the Tipton Slasher. Tom weighed only about 150 pounds, while the Slasher was a giant and topped

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the beam at over 200 pounds. Yet Sayers, by superior skill and science, whipped the big fellow.

ANNIVERSARIES OF RING BATTLES

1865—Harry Lewis knocked out Mike Ward in 9th round at Grand Rapids, Mich. In falling Ward struck his head violently on the floor of the ring. He was carried away unconscious, and an examination by surgeons disclosed that he had suffered concussion of the brain. He died the following day. The death of Ward was one of the comparatively infrequent tragedies which give the opponents of boxing an opportunity to denounce the game as "brutal," although as a matter of fact baseball, football and many other sports claim many more victims than boxing. Ward was a Canadian, and up to the time of his tragic defeat by the New York Hebrew he had never been knocked out, although he had lost on points to Joe Gans and Jimmy Gardner. He had been fighting about six

years, and had gained an excellent reputation in the lightweight division. Another Canadian boxer, Harry Tenney, the bantamweight, was killed earlier in the same year as the result of a bout with Frankie Neil at San Francisco.

1876—George Kerwin, "The Mystery," lightweight boxer, born in Providence.

1889—Freddie Andrews, Irish-American lightweight, born in Milwaukee.

SENTIMENT AMONG CONGRESSMEN FAVORS NATIONAL DEFENSE

Sentiment among the nation's lawmakers, before whom, in a few months, will go President Wilson's plan for preparedness, favors the strengthening of the national defenses, according to a canvass instituted by the New York World. The replies from senators and congressmen received indicate that the plan will get 77 votes in the Senate and 241 in the House. It contemplates an expenditure within the ensuing five years of more than \$1,000,000,000, divided as follows: \$500,000,000 on the navy, \$400,000,000 on the army. It means a sea force as strong, defensively, as Great Britain's and, within three years, a land force, including state troops of 875,000 men and ultimately 1,070,000. It is said that, while the President expects some opposition to the plan, no organized effort in that direction is yet apparent. It was expected that Representative James Hay of Virginia, chairman of the committee on military affairs, would oppose the plan, but he is in open advocacy of their adoption.

Replies were received from four of Connecticut's five congressmen. All favored the plan. The Senators did not answer the inquiry. Those who replied that they are in favor are Congressman P. Davis Oakey, John Q. Tilson, E. J. Hill and James P. Glynn. Congressman Hill is quoted in the article as saying: "I am heartily in favor of any program for a thorough defense of this country from attack from any nation, whatsoever, and, in my judgment, the measures taken to secure such a defensive position should be met by current taxation now and not imposed on future generations by the issue of bonds."

OFF FOR COAST

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